ASTROLOGICAL SIGNATURES

The Ritual of Egyptian Initiation

Serial No. 1 C. C. ZAIN Course 2-1

THE BROTHERHOOD OF LIGHT

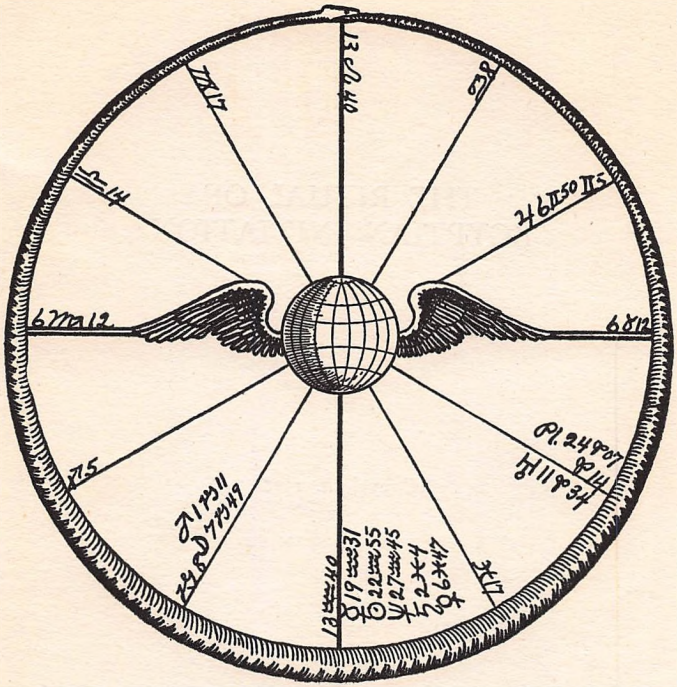


THE RITUAL OF EGYPTIAN INITIATION

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ELBERT BENJAMINE

Serial No. 1

THE CHURCH OF LIGHT
Box 1525 Los Angeles 53, California



THOMAS A. EDISON, February 11, 1847, 11:38 p.m. 82:30W. 41:20N.

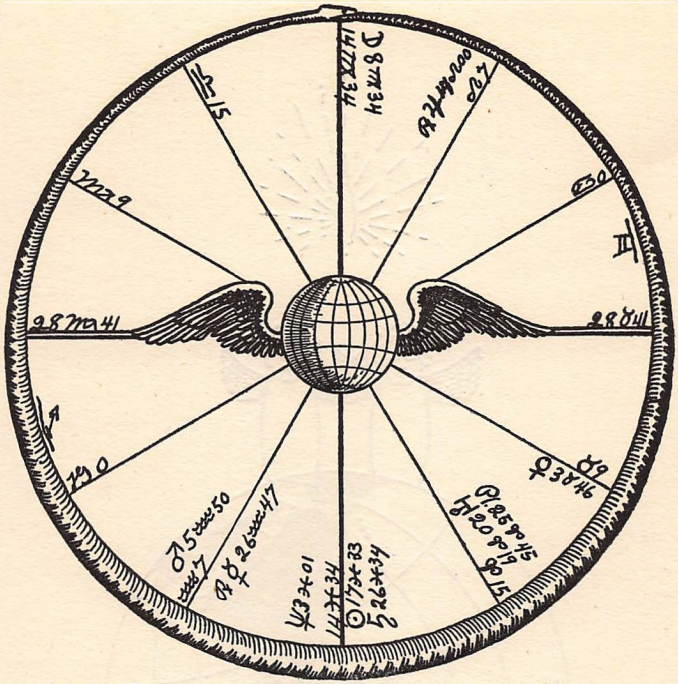
World's greatest inventor (Uranus square Moon and Mars), and world's greatest expert on source and use of materials (Sun, Mercury and Neptune conjunction Saturn in 4th).

Lost money in companies promoting his inventions (Uranus in 5th, square Mars in 2nd).

Was endowed (Jupiter in 8th, sextile Uranus) in such a way that if he lost his own money he could continue his experiments.

Fame through inventions (Uranus trine M. C.).

Had loyal support of employees, and contributed immensely to human welfare (Pluto, universal welfare planet, in 6th, sextile Sun, Neptune and Mercury in the house ruling his laboratory, the 4th). He left, as thus also indicated, considerable property at his death.



LUTHER BURBANK, March 7, 1849, midnight. 71:40W. 42:30N.

Fame as world's greatest plant breeder and horticulturist (Sun in 4th, opposition M.C., conjunction Saturn, semi-sextile Uranus).

Developed innumerable varieties of useful vegetables, fruits and flowers through chance (Pluto and Uranus in 5th, sextile Mercury) variations. Efforts contributed greatly to human welfare (Pluto, universal welfare planet, semi-sextile Saturn, conjunction Uranus, sextile Mercury).

At an advanced age orthodox churches attacked him as an unbeliever (Jupiter in 9th opposition Mars), and the bitter controversy in which he engaged is believed to have hastened his death (Sun in house ruling end of life, opposition Moon in house of religion, ruler of 8th).



THE RITUAL OF EGYPTIAN INITIATION



HE Western World is fast becoming aware that beneath the allegories and unconvincing verbiage of the sacred books there lies concealed a primitive secret doctrine, that behind apparently meaningless religious usages and pious jugglery there is a substance of sound psychological practice, that even outside the consecrated precincts of the Church—notably in Freemasonry and kindred fraternities—there are rites and ceremonies which convey by their symbolism fragments of knowledge concerning the history and destiny of the soul. Convinced of this, many worthy students are now endeavoring to raise the veil that so long has shrouded the mysteries of antiquity, hoping to solve the sacred allegories and correctly to interpret the symbolism of modern fraternities. To assist these in their research, I here propose to describe in detail the various steps, explaining the esoteric significance of each, of the ritual of initiation as conducted anciently in Egypt.

Not that the ceremonies and elaborate rites of the Samothracian Mysteries, those of Eleusis and Bacchus in Greece, and the Saturnalia of Rome, as well as the ritual of modern Freemasons, lack in mystical significance do I select Egypt, but because without exception these latter derived their procedure

from the Mysteries of Ancient Egypt. Thus by interpreting these rites at their common source, even though they have been sometimes obscured by later transformations, we shall be able to perceive the fundamental concepts that underlie them all.

In this work we are fortunate in having a treatise, not entirely inaccessible to modern readers, that gives a detailed description of the Egyptian Mysteries. Iamblichus, a noted scholar and Neo-Platonist who lived in the first half of the fourth century, wrote a work upon the Egyptian Mysteries in which he portrays the principal steps and trials imposed upon the candidate during initiation. This description was translated into the French by P. Christian, and has been drawn upon freely for information by the more eminent students of the tarot, as it contains a complete description of the Egyptian tarot. In 1901 it was translated from the French into English by my good friend Genevieve Stebbins, who has given me permission to make use of her translation in this lesson and in the course on The Sacred Tarot.

I, therefore, shall follow accurately the trials to which the Egyptian candidate for initiation was subjected, as described by Iamblichus, and shall endeavor at each step also to explain what originally was intended to be conveyed to the mind of the candidate. Such trials in some form, handed down from this remote period, persist today, as witnessed by the hazing of newcomers at school, and the riding of the goat in our lodges.

But why should tests of fitness for initiation be

called riding the goat? This revolves about the significance of the five-pointed star which from antiquity has been employed as the symbol of man. The star placed with one point up has the significance of intelligence ruling the four elementary kingdoms, reason dominating the instincts of the flesh. It is thus the Grecian Hygeia, used by the Pythagoreans as the symbol of health. Now, in the zodiac the head of man, organ of intelligence, is ruled by Aries, pictured among the constellations as the Ram. In sacred works, consequently, to designate that the creative forces are directed by intelligence, it is common to refer to this circumstance as the lamb, and is so mentioned by St. John.

The five-pointed star when inverted, however, signifies man standing on his head; reason dominated by lust, passion, and selfishness; and is thus emblematical of chaos, the pit, black magic, and the devil. Zodiacally the home sign of Saturn, the original of our Satan, is Capricorn, pictured in the firmament by a goat. The goat, whose beard forms the downward point, whose ears form the two lateral points, and whose horns form the two upward points of a five-pointed star, therefore, as well as the inverted five-pointed star, is a symbol of black magic and evil. St. John refers to this inverted star as a falling star named wormwood. It will also now be apparent why the separation of the good and the evil should be referred to in the Scripture as dividing the sheep from the goats. The goat is the symbol of evil, and riding the goat signifies that temptations have been vanquished, the devil overcome, and

the animal instincts sublimated into spiritual assets.

In the course of initiation, past or present, the candidate comes into the possession of new knowledge and new powers that alike are capable of either use or abuse, the proper application of which requires a high moral standard. To become master of the occult sciences, which ancient religious law forbade to be placed in writing, requires a strong intellect. The practice of white magic demands fortitude, persistence, self-confidence, and courage. Therefore, to prove the candidate's mental, moral, and physical fitness to receive the Hermetic Secret Doctrine, the strength of these qualities were, and are, subjected to test.

The primary object of all ancient Mysteries, however, and by far the most important use of the initiatory ritual, was to impress indelibly upon the mirror of his consciousness, by means of never-to-be-forgotten experiences, the past history, present opportunities, and future destiny of the soul. During the course of his travail there was also often another result attained. The stimulus received by his psychic faculties frequently opened the senses of the soul to visions of transcendental realms, and awakened the dormant powers of his divine self to new potency.

It is true that in some of the Mysteries the birth, crucifixion, interment, and resurrection of the sun were celebrated. But the initiate recognized in the sun's annual pilgrimage a direct analogy to the experiences of the soul in its cyclic journey. Likewise, in some, certain experiences of the soul were given

preeminence. Thus the ecstatic reunion of the soul with its divine source gave rise to the Bacchic frenzies; the orgies originally representing the reunion of separated souls, the wine being emblematical of the mixture of masculine and feminine magnetism.

Now it is common knowledge that the classic nations, as well as other people of antiquity, believed in the doctrine that the soul once existed in a spiritual state of Edenic purity, was tempted to undergo involution into material form for the sake of experience, and must ultimately win its way back to paradisical bliss. While recognizing that sex symbols were a prominent feature in the Mysteries, and that sex doctrines were an important revelation, yet most commentors have preferred to omit them, either through ignorance of their true function, or for fear of shocking the modern sense of propriety. These sex doctrines of the ancient Mysteries are not what is currently termed sex practices, being neither devoted to sex magic nor to celibacy. They are doctrines of the true and pure relationship of marriage, such as today would be approved by our most eminent physicians and psychologists.

All life and activity being the result of polarity, the history and the mission of the soul can only be comprehended in association with its sexual activities. Now the ancient Secret Doctrine is very emphatic that in the beginning the ego is androgynous. After its differentiation, corresponding to birth, as it involves down from the celestial realm

to the highest state of the spiritual world it develops a soul sphere—a sphere of consciousness organized in celestial substance. But to contact still coarser substance such as spiritual substance, astral substance, and physical substance, these energies become polarized into two separate channels of flow, into two organizations of consciousness, into two souls. This is the separation of the Twin Souls; who are over-shadowed and energized by one ego, yet each develops individual consciousness.

This separation is beautifully described in the Bible as Eve taken from the original Adam, who had been created in the image of God: "Male and Female created he them." Yet after the descent into material conditions and partaking of the evolutionary tree—gaining a knowledge of good and evil —to become as gods, as the Bible states it, they must also partake of the Tree of Life.

This tree of life is the reunion of the separated male and female souls. This is portrayed in the Greek ritual as Dionysus, slain and dismembered, after which the parts are collected and reunited in a new birth. In Egypt, Osiris is portrayed as murdered and the fourteen dismembered parts (each soul possessing a septenary constitution) sent floating down the Nile (the current of involutionary life) finally to be cast upon the muddy banks of the Delta (the material world). But faithful Isis (Nature) gathers together these fragments and breathing upon them the breath of life they become reunited and Osiris is born anew, never again to die. These

allegories symbolically picture the drama of the soul's descent from the celestial state, the separation of twin souls in the highest realm of the spiritual world, who after a time Nature again brings together, breathes upon them the breath of love, uniting them, and by their united strength they become immortal.

Now, in the description of the trials with which Iamblichus has furnished us, the Sphinx of Gizeh served as the entrance to subterranean vaults in which the initiation was conducted. From between the forward limbs corridors closed by a secret door ran to crypts beneath the Great Pyramid.

As in modern fraternities, before the candidate was admitted to participate in the trials he must be selected by unanimous vote. Then he must give himself unreservedly into the hands of his guides and place implicit confidence in them, obeying their commands without asking questions. If we bear in mind that the whole ritual symbolically depicts the cycle of the soul, we perceive that this represents the faith that the soul should have in the wisdom and beneficence of Deity, and the obedience it should manifest to Nature's laws. The ego is called from an undifferentiated state by the unanimous demand for souls to be fitted for specific work in the cosmic scheme of things. During the earlier portion of their initiation into the mysteries of life, these souls do not know the why or wherefore of the suffering they endure; but if they place implicit faith in the guidance of their spiritual tendencies, at last they

will see the light shine through the darkness, and following this, will be led into the glorious sunshine of Self-Conscious Immortality.

At a distance from the Sphinx the neophyte's eyes are bandaged, and he is led to its foot an unknown distance, where a door of bronze opens to admit him and then closes without noise. Bronze is an alloy of tin, ruled by Jupiter, and copper, ruled by Venus. Venus is the planet of love, and Jupiter in addition to being the planet of beneficence, through his rulership of the sign Sagittarius, the sign of the higher mind, is in one of his aspects considered the planet of wisdom. Bronze, therefore, represents not only a union of a male and a female potency, but also a fusion of love and wisdom. Now, the bandaged eyes of the neophyte represent the unconscious condition of the pure, diffusive spirit before its differentiation as an ego. The journey of the neophyte to the foot of the Sphinx represents the indrawing of this spirit potency to the celestial matrix of the ego's angelic parents. Its projection on the toilsome journey of involution and evolution, through the intense vibrations of wisdom and love of its angelic progenitors, is signified by the neophyte silently passing through the door of bronze.

The Sphinx, into which the neophyte enters, is a synthetic representation of all the energies in the zodiac, being composed in its unconventionalized form of the emblems of the four quadrants of the heavens—a lion, an eagle, a man, and a bull. It thus symbolizes a cycle, and because time is meas-

ured by the sun's passage through this cycle, it also signifies the passage of time. For the ego time was not prior to its differentiation.

Next, the neophyte is led down a spiral stairway of 22 steps and through a second bronze door which when closed so harmonizes with the wall of the circular chamber into which it opens as to be undetectable. He is halted upon the verge of an abyss and commanded to cross his arms upon his breast and remain motionless. In the heavens, the solstitial colure and the equinoctial colure make a cross, the original of the swastika cross. This heavenly cross, due to the revolution of the earth on its axis, apparently moves around the heavens each day from east to west, and due to the procession of the equinoxes moves through the constellations also from east to west, though slowly, and is thus symbolized by the swastika with its points turned to the left, this being the emblem of evolution. The swastika with its points turned to the right is the emblem of involution.

The spiral stairway of 22 steps symbolizes the involutionary descent through the embryonic celestial state of the seraphs, the door being the passage into the paradisical worlds of the cherubs, where for the first time vibrations of love and wisdom, represented by the door of bronze, begin to disturb the tranquil innocence of the ego. Twenty-two steps are emblematical of the zodical circle of 12 signs and the chain of 10 planets which exert their influence upon the soul, and upon all Nature, throughout all states, from the highest to the lowest. The soul's

spiral pathway through each plane of existence is thus influenced by them. The candidate's crossed arms signify progress.

The candidate now halted upon the abyss, represents that state in which a rib was being removed from Adam for the creation of Eve. The abyss represents the grosser worlds into which the ego cannot descend; upon which it directly can have no influence. Its vibrations are too fine to affect substance coarser than that of the paradisical world, or upper realm of spirit, represented by the circular chamber in which the neophyte now stands. But during its descent through the seraphic realms it has evolved a soul sphere, or organization of consciousness, containing both male and female potencies. That it may transmit motion to grosser substance, this soul sphere polarizes its motion and divides into two organizations of consciousness, into two souls related to each other as male and female; the Adam and Eve of each deific ego.

While the candidate stands motionless upon the verge of the abyss, the two guardians who have accompanied him take from an altar, and dress in, white linen robes. One wears a girdle of silver and a mask representing the head of a bull, the other wears a belt of gold and a mask representing a lion's head. The robes of white symbolize purity, of linen typify strength. Gold is sacred to the sun, and the lion's head is the sign Leo in which the sun exerts its greatest power. Silver is sacred to the moon, and the sign where the moon has its best influence is

Taurus, symbolized by the head of the bull. Thus do the two guardians, in a most spectacular manner, represent the masculine and feminine portions of the ego's soul sphere.

The Thesmothete, as the guardian is called, representing Pi-Rhe, genius of the sun, stands at the neophyte's right, while the Thesmothete dressed as Pi-Ish, genius of the moon, stands at his left. Suddenly, with a great noise, a trap door descends in front of the neophyte, and at the same time the bandage is snatched from his eyes and he beholds the two figures, one on either side. Standing thus he represents the ego at the moment of parturition when the twin souls are born. The shock of their separation is denoted by the noise, and as Adam and Eve they stand by his side.

Then, from out of the abyss, only half of its body visible, rises a horrible mechanical spectre holding in its hands a huge scythe which, barely missing him, sweeps past the neophyte's neck seven times. This spectre is the symbol of death. The scythe represents the changes which time brings. Only the upper half of the spectre is visible, to designate that the higher qualities of the soul alone survive the changes of time. The seven sweeps of the scythe, weapon of death, indicate that the soul both in involution and in evolution passes through conditions ruled by each of the seven planets.

Now, according to kabalistical doctrine, before the creation of the universe there existed the all-diffusive spirit, called Ain Soph Aur. From this the universe

came into manifestation by means of ten emanations, the first of which, called Kether, or crown, signifies motion, and corresponds in human affairs to the ego. The next two emanations are Chocmah and Binah, wisdom and intelligence, which involve the idea of polarity and correspond to the positive and negative souls at the moment of their separation. From this godhead, Kether, Chocmah, and Binah, the universe evolves by means of seven other emanations, or impulses; and according to the law of correspondences, the soul also builds its microcosmic universe about itself by similar means, the seven-fold constitution of man being evolved, as was indicated, by passing through environmental influences ruled by each of the seven planets, a circumstance symbolized by the seven sweeps of the death-dealing scythe, evolution being accomplished only after the separation of the souls, by means of successive lives and deaths.

After the enactment of this drama, the Thesmothetes lead the neophyte to the door of a small dark tunnel, giving him a lamp with which to light his way. The lamp represents the inner promptings of the ego which if listened to will direct the soul aright. He is now left to his own devices to indicate that the twin souls each go their separate ways. The tunnel is so small that to enter it he must proceed on hands and knees, and to indicate that once the cycle of necessity has been entered there is no return except through following out Nature's plan, the door immediately shuts behind him. This tunnel dips more and more downward as he follows it until finally it ends abruptly at the brink of a crater formed

like an inverted cone. The tunnel symbolizes the descent of the soul through the spiritual realm, and the inverted cone, the sides of which are polished to reflect the light of his lamp even as in the astral world the astral light is seen, represents the astral world. Down the side of this cone he observes an iron ladder of 78 rungs, and finding no other method of advance open, he descends it. At the bottom of the ladder, he observes when he arrives there, a yawning well. Therefore, to find a way out he starts to ascend, looking carefully for a means of egress. Climbing seven steps upward he notices a crevice in the rocks just large enough to admit his body, and through this he squeezes, to find himself at the foot of an ascending spiral stairway.

The ladder is of iron to indicate that after leaving the spiritual realm the soul has entered a realm of force, a realm where animal tendencies as well as those higher are present, where the planet Mars has full sway. To indicate that during this period of its journey the soul is only a rudimental form, at no time can the neophyte assume the upright position, the position of the truly human. The 78 rungs of the astral ladder represent the influences that exert their power over the descending soul: the 12 zodiacal signs, the 10 planets, the 12 mundane houses and the denizens of the 4 astral kingdoms, the 36 decanates of the zodiac, and the 4 quadrants of the zodiacal circle.

The bottom rung of the ladder represents that point where the involving soul can go no lower, the

point where it contacts the mineral realm and first incarnates in objective form. The 7 upward steps represent the 7 states of its evolution from mineral to man. In this seventh state the soul has behind it those experiences which have given it a complex astral organization, which enables it to be attracted to a human mother. The travail at its birth into human form is represented by the neophyte when he painfully squeezes through the narrow cleft in the rocks.

Now, from the beginning of its cyclic journey until it is born as a human being there are just 108 steps—22 prior to the separation of the male soul from the female soul, 78 involutionary steps through the astral realm, 7 steps from mineral to man, and an 8th step representing birth into the human form, symbolized by passing through the crevice in the rock. These 108 steps correspond to the 108 tablets of the more complete Egyptian tarot. The set of 78 cards commonly known constitute the exoteric set such as was revealed to all who succeeded in passing the trials here described. But initiates know that at an advanced stage, after undergoing soul purification, and being admitted to the rites of the inner sanctuary, the neophyte was instructed in the use of an esoteric set, consisting of 22 Astro-Masonic symbols, and that at a still higher point in initiation there was revealed to him a septenary of Kabalistical Pictographs, sealed with an 8th, thus constituting in all 108 tablets, completing the Deific number 9 (1+8=9).

Now, for all ordinary purposes the exoteric set of

78 tablets, which constitutes the common Egyptian tarot, is quite adequate. These are reproduced in Brotherhood of light tarot cards. And here also, I believe, I should designate where the tablets of the esoteric set are accurately described. In ancient times these were kept most secret, but that they might not be lost to coming generations, they have been fully described and commented on in a book unfortunately now out of print, but which is possessed by many students throughout the world. This book is "Light of Egypt, Vol. No. II," by T. H. Burgoyne. It presents this ancient esoteric set under the caption THE TABLETS OF AETH. The first 22 are the Astro-Masonic symbols referred to. Next is given a vision of the 10 great kabalistical powers, or angels, of the universe. The first 7 of these, as given under, VISION, are the 7 Kabalistical Pictographs referred to. But that this esoteric set may also be used separately as explanatory both of the kabala and of the 33 degrees of Freemasonry, there is added an eighth, ninth, and tenth pictograph, which were not included in the complete Egyptian set of 108 tablets. The seal, which is the seal of the earth, however, is given, a seal that is dual yet is one, the obverse and reverse view being represented on one tablet.

After the neophyte has passed through the cleft, symbolizing his expulsion into the world of human activities through the sacred yoni, he ascends the spiral stairway of 22 steps and halts before the entrance to the sanctuary. These 22 steps, symbolical of the influence upon human life of the 12 signs and

10 planets, signify his experiences under their influence from birth to the time that he seeks occult initiation. A grating of bronze—symbol of love and wisdom—bars his progress, but a magus, called a Pastophore, opens the gate and welcomes him in. Thus always is there a master ready to assist and instruct the neophyte who, in love and in devotion to sacred science, has successfully passed the early ordeals.

The neophyte now finds himself in a long gallery sustained by sculptured caryatides representing 24 sphinxes, 12 on either side. In each space between two sphinxes the wall is covered with a frescoed painting, these 22 pictures being lighted by a line of 11 lamps that extends between the two rows of figures.

A sphinx, representing the four quadrants of heaven, symbolizes any cycle of time, and as here arranged they designate the 24 hours of the day, as well as the 24 elders of the Apocalypse. The 22 frescoed paintings picture the 22 Major Arcana of the tarot, the symbolism of which at this time is explained to the neophyte and by him committed to memory. The eleven lamps are crystal sphinxes in each of which burns an asbestos wick at the surface of a sacred oil, each lamp being supported by a bronze tripod.

The flame of the lamp represents the ego, a living, brilliant, changeless spark of Deity. The asbestos wick which ever feeds the flame yet is never consumed, represents the immortal soul feeding the

ego with the results of its experiences. These experiences, gained through cycles of time as symbolized by the form of the sphinx, and in objective realms as indicated by the crystalline structure of the lamp, are typified by the oil. The transparent quality of the lamp suggests that matter offers no barrier to the sight of the initiate. The tripod, upon which the lamp rests, an alloy of a positive and a negative metal, presents the symbolic aspect of two interlaced trines. The negative trine symbolizes involution, and the positive trine evolution, together constituting the support of the soul and making possible its conscious immortal existence.

One of the lamps is set slightly apart from the other ten and represents the final synthesis of the others, symbolizing also the point from which the neophyte departs to undergo further perils. The 22 frescoed pictures each correspond to one of the 12 zodiacal signs or 10 planets and constitute an esoteric interpretation of their attributes and functions. The 22nd picture corresponds to the unknown; but each of the other 21 correspond either to one of man's seven physical senses, to one of his seven psychic senses, or to one section of his seven-fold constitution. Each is also related to one of the 21 branches of occult science that the neophyte is called upon to master before he can aspire to adeptship. Taken as a whole—as shown in detail in Course VI—they constitute a science of the will and an absolute religious doctrine, and each corresponds to a definite step in the neophyte's occult advancement. The 10 lamps represent the numerical decade as

well as the ten emanations of the Sephiroth of the Kabala, and together with the 22 pictured Major Arcana point to the 32 paths of wisdom. With the final lamp, or 33rd symbol, they constitute the exoteric view of the same set of universal principles the esoteric side of which is set forth in the 33 TABLETS OF AETH previously mentioned. They, therefore, represent the original ideas from which the 33 chapters of the kabalistical book, Sephir Yetzirah, and the 33 degrees of modern Freemasonry, were derived.

The neophyte is permitted to remain in this Gallery of the Arcanum under the instruction of his master until he has thoroughly familiarized himself with all the symbols and their interpretations. This symbolizes all that he may hope to attain from the physical world.

To progress farther on the path, the soul must temporarily leave the physical world and soar into other realms where ascended souls will conduct its initiation on the inner planes. To reach the spiritual plane, either while still connected with the physical body or after death, the soul must pass through the four kingdoms of the astral world. To symbolize this journey, the neophyte leaves the Gallery of the Arcana. First, to represent his travel through the realm of the gnomes he passes through a tunnel. At the end of this tunnel, to represent the realm of salamanders, he is confronted with a roaring fire through which he must go if he would not retreat. This fire is really not so great as it at first appears, and he

passes through it without injury, but no sooner has he passed it than it is replenished by unseen hands to make his return impossible. Thus he realizes an important truth; that in occultism he who places his hand to the plow and then turns back is lost. Next, as representing the influence of the undines, he is compelled to wade through a stagnant lake the water of which rises to his chin, but by going on tiptoe he manages to reach the opposite shore, and climbs dripping and cold upon a platform which he sees in front of a closed door.

This door is of bronze, and is divided latterly by a column on which is sculptured the head of a lion having in its mouth a ring figuring a serpent biting its own tail. The ring in the form of a serpent symbolizes eternity, and the lion symbolizes courage. Courage, therefore, he is made aware, should sustain his efforts throughout eternity. To open the door he grasps the ring, and as it resists he uses both hands. But no sooner does he get a firm grip upon it than the platform beneath his feet drops from under him and leaves him suspended in air, in the realm of the sylphs. The trap beneath his feet rises again promptly, and he passes through the door which now opens to permit his entrance. This bronze door symbolizes love and wisdom. It is divided into a right, or positive, half, and a left, or negative, half; the dividing column, placed where positive and negative forces join, symbolizing the tree of life that confers immortality. The sign Leo is natural ruler of love affairs. The lion's head, however, as Leo is ruled by the sun, also typifies the

male element, while the circle in its mouth typifies the female element. The symbol as a whole, therefore, represents the complete and harmonious fusion of the sexes, actuated by love. Thus is conveyed to the neophyte's mind the thought that the door of the sanctuary opens only in the union of two harmonious souls inspired by love and guided by wisdom. Not by one alone can the spiritual heights be scaled, but through the mighty movement within the finer substances of space caused by the soul union of both.

The neophyte thus having triumphed over the tests by earth, fire, water, and air, representing his passage through the astral kingdoms, is now met by 12 Necores. These men typify the translated souls of those who once lived upon the earth and who belong to each of the 12 zodiacal signs. They blindfold his eyes, to signify the dullness of the real spiritual perceptions until higher initiation is attained, and lead him to a crypt beneath the pyramid where the college of the magi awaits him. This crypt symbolizes the spiritual world which he now ritualistically has entered. The pyramid above is a symbol of the earth which he has abandoned, and being directly above this crypt indicates the exact correspondence between the physical world and the world spiritual, between that which is above and that which is below.

The walls of this crypt are sculptured with the pictures of the 48 constellations that represent the influence and spiritual significance of the 12 zodiacal signs and the 36 zodiacal decanates. There are also

pictured representations of the 7 planetary angels, and the 360 genii of the degrees of the zodiac, through which the sun passes in one year. Beneath each of these pictures is an explanation which can only be read by those possessing the key, this key being that of Spiritual Astrology, which is treated in complete detail in Course VII. At each of the four angles of the crypt stands a bronze statue posed upon a triangular column, one having the head of a man, one the head of a bull, one the head of a lion, and one the head of an eagle. These figures denote —as each is posed on a trine—the four zodiacal triplicities. Each head bears a cross—symbol of union of forces and of earth—upon which is a light, as if engendered by the union and representing the divine fire that permeates and vivifies earth.

The dome of the vault contains a golden rose of five petals. The rose, because it is harbinger of spring, represents renewed life. Five is the number of man, and gold is the metal sacred to spirit. This entire symbol represents those who have attained spiritual regeneration. From the rose are suspended seven lamps, each having three branches. The three branches signify the three great divisions of occultism: astrology, alchemy, and magic. Each of these is divided into 7 distinct subjects, the 21 branches signifying the 21 branches of occult science which the neophyte is called upon to master and which illuminate the mind of the adept.

Below this rose sits the Hierophant. He is dressed in purple, sacred to Jupiter, the planet governing

the higher mind, indicating that he is master of the sacred sciences. His forehead is girt with a circle of gold to indicate that his mind is fully cognizant of spiritual things. From this band arise seven stars, indicating that he is in possession of the seven states of consciousness that are the heritage of the perfect man. He occupies a silver throne. This metal is sacred to woman, and indicates that he is not ignorant of woman's share in the attainment of spiritual victory. The throne is placed upon a raised platform, and thus indicates the exalted position which his knowledge and efforts have conferred upon him.

To indicate their purity, the other Magi are dressed in white. And to indicate that they also have the spiritual light, there is a band of gold about each brow. At right and left of the Hierophant they are arranged in triple semicircles, there being three semicircles on the Hierophant's right and three on his left, so that he occupies the central, or seventh, point between the two triads. The triad on the left is negative, and represents an equal development of body, intellect, and soul in woman. The triad on the right is positive, and represents an equal development of body, intellect, and soul in man. Thus the Hierophant, himself masculine yet occupying a throne of silver, by his unique position symbolizes the meeting and blending of the very highest type of man and woman.

In the rear, under a purple canopy, symbolical of beneficent Nature as she overshadows all, is a colossal

statue of Isis. It is composed of an alloy of lead, tin, iron, gold, copper, mercury and silver; each being a metal ruled by one of the seven planets and thus symbolizing one of the seven active principles that pervade all nature. The statue wears a triangular diadem of silver, with an aigrette of 12 rays, and upon her breast is a golden rose in the centre of a golden cross. The arms are extended in front in such a manner as to form an equilateral triangle with the forehead at the apex. From each of the open fingers streams toward the earth a golden ray.

The rose upon the golden cross symbolizes the united transmutation of positive and negative energies from a lower range of action to a higher scale of vibration. The ten golden rays typify the chain of ten planets through which Nature molds the destiny of all things. The silver aigrette of 12 rays represents the 12 zodiacal signs that act as sounding boards from which the vibrations of the planets are reverberated. The equilateral triangle of silver signifies woman who has proportionally developed her body, intellect and soul. The triangle from which flow the golden rays indicates man who has cultivated in a harmonious manner his body, intellect and soul. Thus their point at the top of the forehead of Isis denotes that Nature's crowning glory is the reunion of two such perfectly developed people.

Before the Hierophant is a table upon which rests a planisphere, and it is here, before the assembled college, that the neophyte, whose eyes are now un-

bandaged, is required to demonstrate his knowledge of astrology by erecting and delineating a birth-chart, calculating the progressed positions and passing judgment upon the events that have taken place in some person's life, and the times when these events have taken place. In order to check the accuracy of his delineations, the chart of some person known to members of the college is selected, but its identity is kept secret from the neophyte. He is expected to portray the temperament of the person, to select the channels of activity into which the life has chiefly been turned, to designate what departments of life are fortunate and what are unfortunate, and to select the times and natures of the principal events that have transpired in his life. Also he is expected to know something of all the other six branches of astrology.

After his knowledge of astrology has been thoroughly tested, he is required to demonstrate his knowledge of the tarot. He must be familiar with the meaning of each of the Major Arcana in each of the three worlds as well as the divinatory significance. He must know the vibratory influence of names, numbers, colors, tones and flowers, and must have some knowledge of the talismanic properties of gems. And he must know how a particular name, number, or other vibratory influence will affect a certain person, as revealed by comparing it with the birth-chart. Finally, he is required to lay out and correctly read a tarot spread, thus demonstrating his ability to use these tablets as divinatory instruments.

After these tests of his knowledge, he is required

to take an oath, similar in its wording to that administered in modern Freemasonry, never to reveal the sacred sciences or other portions of the mysteries. Then he is required to take a second oath, vowing himself to submission and obedience to the Hierophant. This second oath represents the pledge the initiate makes to himself to obey always the voice of his conscience. At this point a terrible noise is heard and an artificial tempest is produced during which the Magi point their swords at his breast and accuse him of past crimes, typifying the day of judgment when the soul will be called upon to render an account of its deeds done while in the flesh. Next, two Necores, each carrying a cup of wine, approach and offer the cups to him. Then the startled candidate is told that one of the cups is quite harmless but that the other contains a deadly poison. Reminding him of the oath he has just taken to obey, the Hierophant commands the neophyte to make choice of, and immediately to drink, the contents of one of the cups.

The harmless cup symbolizes love and virtue; the poison cup, passion and vice. Each soul is confronted with the trial of this choice, and only by obeying the Voice of the Silence can it safely be passed. If, in spite of his oath of submission, the neophyte refuses to obey, he is informed that the initiation is broken and he is confined to a dungeon for seven months and then allowed a second trial. If he thus fails at the first test he may never rise higher in the ranks of the Magi, though he may gain freedom later by successfully passing the test. In such a case he repre-

sents a weak and wavering soul who fears to obey the dictates of his inner self. The neophyte's only hope of escaping extinction is to pass the ordeal, though once failing he does not have the opportunities that would have been open to him had he taken the decisive step at once. The laws of the Magi compel him to pass the trial or perish in the dungeon cell.

Thus the soul, by virtue of moral integrity and aspiration, is represented as triumphing over the barriers that confine it to lower spiritual states. His blindfolded entrance to the crypt indicates his entrance into the first state of the spiritual world; the tests of his astrological and his kabalistical skill take him symbolically into the second spiritual state; his first oath conducts him into the third spiritual state; his second oath leads him into the fourth spiritual state; the trial of the cups gives him entrance into the fifth spiritual state; and now, to represent the sixth spiritual state, he is led into a neighboring hall which is furnished luxuriously to convey the impression of a royal nuptial chamber.

His clothing is removed by attendants, indicating that all grossness has been purged away. He is dressed in white linen to symbolize the strength of purity. An exquisite repast is enjoyed while his ears are refreshed by strains of rapturous music, emblematical of the higher states of ecstacy and the music of the spheres. As he finishes the refreshments, curtains are drawn aside, revealing to him beautiful young women dancing. To conceal their identity, even as the body hides the soul, they wear

masks attached at the brow by a circle of gold, typical of intellectual illumination. They are scantily clad in a gauzy veil spangled with golden bees, the veil indicating how slight is the obstruction that bars man from realization, and the golden bees signifying the divine creative essence in its most spiritual aspect, and further, that the veil may be penetrated only by the industrious; for the slothful soul will never penetrate the spiritual states. Across each girl's shoulders is thrown a filmy scarf, symbolizing the spiritual raiment formed by exalted aspirations and devotion to truth; and each carries a garland of flowers, indicative of innocence, joy and supreme happiness.

Delightful perfumes fill the air, and the neophyte approaches the dancers. After a time two of their number throw their garlands about him, encircling him with a chain of roses, while the others flee. These two girls continue to dance about him, shaking their garlands by turn as if to provoke his choice. The chain of roses represents the binding power of love.

If the neophyte dares to violate the sanctity of the mysteries he is in actual danger, but if he continues to conduct himself with propriety the Magi come to congratulate him upon passing the last of the trials, and confer upon him the title of Zelator. This final act in the initiation symbolizes the reunion of twin souls, which takes place upon the boundary of the sixth and seventh spiritual states. While conveying the idea that all passion must be evolved

upward into pure unsullied love before this state can be reached, and that this sacred union must not be profaned with violence or carnal desire, it at the same time, by the two girls dancing about the neophyte, symbolizes the original trinity that existed before the separation of the sexes—ego, male soul, and female soul. It should be noticed that this scene is very different from that representing the separation; for that was a region of hideous monsters and dim consciousness; while this is a place of joyous beauty, ecstatic sensations, and vivid perceptions. By this union the soul is represented as passing into the seventh spiritual state together with its long missing mate, and can no longer be considered human, for it has now attained to the state of angelhood; immortality is no longer a possibility, but an assured fact.

Lastly, to impress upon the new Zelator the fate of those who follow the inversive path, he is led in the midst of 12 Necores, representing the zodiacal signs, into the opening of a cavern. Here a pale, uncertain light reveals to him a pit in which a sphinx is tearing the effigy of a human form. So, according to tradition, will the cycles surely destroy those who lose their immortality by following the fateful road of selfishness and black magic. Thus ends the ritual of Egyptian initiation, portraying, as it does, the cycle of the soul.